

AMARC

...A Diamond in the Desert

Supplement to the Desert Airman

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A-10 technician one-of-a-kind

Photos and story by Tech. Sgt. Brian Davidson
*Aerospace Maintenance And Regeneration Center
Public Affairs*

AMARC has nearly 900 Depot Maintenance Activity Group employees with the unique and specialized skills and knowledge needed to maintain more than 70 different types of aircraft.

One particular aircraft specialist has developed a skill that is so specialized, she is the only known maintainer with the ability to accomplish her unique mission.

Lockheed-Martin Aerospace contractor Angie Drottz has become an expert in custom making antiballistic foam inserts for Air Force Thunderbolt II aircraft as part of a project designed to double the operational life-span of the aircraft.

The A-10 Service Life Extension Program uses structural modifications to strengthen stressed areas of the aircraft wings. It was during this modification process that Mrs. Drottz identified the need for new antiballistic foam, and found that many of the foam inserts were either unavailable through the supply system or extremely expensive.

With research and determination, Mrs. Drottz, who has earned the nickname "Foam Girl," developed the skills to custom make each of the more than 100 foam inserts for the aircraft wings.



Angie Drottz, Lockheed-Martin Aerospace contractor, custom fits a piece of antiballistic foam into the center wing of an A-10 Thunderbolt II.

—See **Foam**, Page 3

Quarterly award winners

The Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center employee and supervisor of the quarter were announced at commander's call May 25.

Left - Judy Ouillette is a supply supervisor and a Most Efficient Organization manager. She earned the award of supervisor of the quarter for instilling the team concept in supporting the A-10 Service Life Extension Program and starting a clean receiving line concept where property is processed as soon as it arrives for quick delivery to the customer.

Right - Richard Ruley is an Aircraft Work Leader. He was awarded employee of the quarter for "pioneering" policies and procedures in the disposal section. His accomplishments resulted in elimination of backlog while identifying, categorizing, inventorying and demiling aircraft components and hazardous materials, while ensuring personnel safety through strict adherence to directives.



Judy Ouillette

*Aerospace Maintenance And Regeneration Center
Supply Supervisor*



Richard Ruley

*Aerospace Maintenance And Regeneration Center
Aircraft Work Leader*

There's never enough time...



Col. Lourdes Castillo
AMARC Commander

Many people complain about not having enough time during the duty day to accomplish all of the things that need to get done.

It's 10 a.m., you're not even halfway through your duty day, and you're already well on your way to what you call an exhaustive morning.

Your cell phone is ringing; you are required to attend an unscheduled meeting. Your first thought? There goes the rest of your morning. Been there? Done that?

Most of us feel that we could work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and still not have sufficient time to get everything done.

We feel like we're always trying to catch up, but never succeeding. The more work you do, the more there seems to be, resulting in a never-ending cycle. It's like adding oil to a car with the drain plug out. You feel like you're following the owner's manual and checking the dipstick, but it seems like you just can't reach the full mark.

The truth of the matter is that we all can reach our full productive potential. We just have to exercise control over all the key elements, like that drain plug. Chances are you're only half as productive as you could possibly be, and down deep, you know that and continue to strive toward your goal of becoming more proficient.

You may never get fully there, but you can

learn to manage your time more practically than you do now. And once you do it, you'll feel much better about yourself.

So, back to our original question: Why don't you have enough hours in the day? The answer: You probably have plenty of time during the day. You're just not operating efficiently.

Each of us works in our own individual way. It's like one person seeing the glass half empty while the next person sees it half full. It's what makes us different and interesting to each other. It's also why some people seem to manage to do a million things during a 10-hour day and others can't manage to accomplish one.

If you can't consider changing your daily habits, then you'll go on wondering where all the hours went at the end of your day. And if you continue along at the same old pace, then the rest of the world will pass you by.

Commander's Suggestion Program

Supporting each other and working together to provide the best programs and services is a goal for all AMARC members.

Ideas, suggestions, comments, concerns and kudos are important to making improvements. One way to pass along a comment or to get an answer to a question through the Commander's Suggestion Program. Responses are posted in the AMARC weekly bulletin. To access the AMARC Commander's Suggestion Program, log on to: <https://amnet.dm.af.mil/>

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Mrs. Drottz cuts a piece of antiballistic foam to make A-10 wing leading edge inserts that are used to help protect the pilot and aircraft fuel tanks from hostile fire in combat.

Foam

Continued from Page 1

“The inserts are important because they help protect both the pilot and fuel cells from hostile fire when the aircraft is in combat,” Mrs. Drottz said. “Each piece of foam is designed to help absorb small arms fire, antiaircraft rounds and shrapnel, and that adds up to survivability.”

During the upgrades of the first two A-10s, technicians were able to reuse the antiballistic inserts from aircraft that had retired from service, but after that, the inserts became scarce.

Mrs. Drottz found that it would cost more than \$60,000 per wing to replace all of the inserts, provided they were available. Looking at the inserts, she decided that she could fabricate them herself—at a cost of less than \$19,000 per wing.

Antiballistic foam is ordered in large blocks, and the Foam Girl goes to work. Using specialized templates she made for each insert and the saws and shapers she also custom made, she meticulously shapes and fits each piece of foam.

Just watching Mrs. Drottz sculpt an insert makes many of the other technicians shake their head in wonderment at how she can match such odd shapes, sizes and angles on each piece. Forming the inserts is as much an art as a science, and each piece takes shape to meet the specific tolerances as defined in the aircraft technical orders, as well as the strictest scrutiny—the scrutiny of the Foam Girl herself. “If it’s not perfect, it doesn’t go in the aircraft,” she said.

Mrs. Drottz developed her aircraft maintenance skills as a child while working with her father, who maintained a crop-duster aircraft, and from her grandfather who taught her how to work with metals and tools. After finishing high school, she joined the Air Force and continued to refine her craft for more than seven years as an aircraft structural mechanic.

Mrs. Drottz plans to continue her unique work at AMARC and hopes to find a position in civil service as an aircraft specialist.

AMARC is an Air Force Materiel Command specialized center tasked with the mission of providing aerospace maintenance and regeneration to its customers and for the sustainment of the warfighter.



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